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ABSTRACT

How the theme of human movement--migration, and particularly immigration--can be integrated into junior high U.S. history and world history/geography courses is discussed. To avoid turning the study of migration into an unwitting process of reinforcing ethnocentrism, two steps need to be taken. First, the movement of people throughout the world should be viewed multidirectionally, not unidirectionally. Second, events should be viewed in multiple perspective from the standpoints of the various participants. For example, U.S. history courses, instead of focusing only on the east-to-west flow of civilization from Europe, should also examine the northwesterly flow of civilization from Africa to America and the northerly flow of Hispanic and Mexican civilization into the U.S. Southwest. Instead of merely examining the development of European civilization and European expansion into other world areas, a world history/geography course might begin with the examination of the independent development of civilizations in Europe, Africa, Asia, Australia, and the Americas, and then examine these processes globally. The paper concludes with a description of a course which utilizes film study to teach about global migration. (RM)

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Teaching about Human Migration in Global Perspective

by Carlos Cortés

no.4

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People move. They always have; they always will. They move because they want to. They move because they need to. They move because they have to.

Throughout history, groups and individuals have made efforts to encourage, obstruct, or regulate the movement of others. Such efforts have taken many forms -- individual efforts to prevent another person from entering one's property, surreptitious group measures to regulate the types of persons who move into a neighborhood, military force to expand or block the expansion of another group of people. The examples are endless.

Around the globe, individual nations have taken steps to control the movement of people. Sometimes these efforts have been directed *internationally* -- restricting, encouraging, forcing, or regulating the movement of people into or out of their territories. Sometimes these efforts have been directed *intranationally* -- restricting, encouraging, forcing, or regulating the movement of people among states, provinces, territories, or other jurisdictions within a country.

Human needs and desires to move have inevitably intersected with, and therefore often come into conflict with, government efforts to regulate movement. These intersections have occurred throughout history, but their extent and complexity have increased in manifold fashion in recent decades. Rapid global population growth, increased economic and political displacement of people, heated debate within many nations over the current and potential impact of immigrants and refugees -- such phenomena reflect the increasing significance of the movement of people, particularly cross-nationally, as a critical global issue.

Look at the United States, for example. U.S. public mythology has historically included a self-vision of the United States as a nation of immigrants. However, in recent years the country has been painfully reexamining its public attitudes and official policies toward immigration. The Statue of Liberty -- whose outstretched arm of welcome has traditionally been the nation's leading immigration symbol -- is rapidly surrendering its metaphorical preeminence to the check points, fences, and Immigration and Naturalization Service round-up buses that embroider the U.S.-Mexican border. To Emma Lazarus' resonant words -- "Give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearning to breathe free" [1] -- perhaps

now should be added, "as long as you don't give me too many of them."

Migration, then, both internationally and intranationally, will remain a global phenomenon.[2] As growing world population produces a veritable shrinking spaceship earth, and as continuing (possibly increasing) economic inequities and political turmoil motivate people to move, migration will hypertrophy as a global issue for continents, for world regions, for nations, and for areas within nations. Globally-concerned educators need to face the question of how well we are preparing young people for a world in which human migration will have a significant impact on all.

Integrating the Curriculum

The concept of human movement falls within the experiential realm of even the youngest of students. What students have not encountered situations in which they experienced personal movement ... a step across a room, a walk down the street, a trip into another town, sometimes a permanent shift of residency, perhaps even to another country? What students have not been involved in situations in which their movements have been obstructed ... by a red light at a street corner, by a locked door, by fear of entering a dark room, by parent or teacher restraint, or by an antagonistic person? What students have not blocked the movements of others ... by slamming a door, by making a threat, by excluding someone from a social gathering? Teachers can use such personal experiences as the fundamental building blocks for helping students develop a better understanding of the phenomenon of human movement, increasing in complexity from personal and school situations to intranational and international migration.

Starting in elementary school and building from student experiences, schools should address the themes of human movement and responses to movement. The elementary school teacher can draw upon students' personal experiences to illustrate these themes and can help students comprehend their pervasiveness by using the school and community as a laboratory for observation and analysis. While this paper focuses on the junior high/middle school, all educators should recognize the need for K-12 coordination in examining the topic. Junior high/middle school teachers should take the initiative in working with elementary feeder schools to ensure continuity and thoughtful sequencing to help students develop a

solidly based and increasingly sophisticated understanding of human movement.

That said, how can the theme of migration be built into the junior high/middle school curriculum? Two types of social studies courses generally offered at this level are ideal for such integration -- U.S. History and World History/Geography. However, social studies teachers should also work closely with teachers in other discipline areas to help students grapple with this theme. For example, literature teachers can contribute to student understanding of the extensiveness and diversity of human movement by examining it through short stories (Jack London's "To Build a Fire"), poetry (Henry Wadsworth Longfellow's "Evangeline"), plays (Arthur Miller's *A View from the Bridge*), and novels (Mark Twain's *Huckleberry Finn* and Tomas Rivera's *...And the Earth Did Not Part)*.

Before exploring individual types of courses, a caveat (or better yet, warning) is in order. The study of human movement, migration, and particularly immigration can easily become mired in ethnocentrism -- the ongoing story of *them* coming to live with *us*. In reality, most people are constantly involved in the dual roles of moving and being moved to. To avoid the inherent danger of turning the study of migration, particularly immigration, into an unwitting process of reinforcing ethnocentrism, two general steps need to be taken. First, the movement of people throughout the world -- from, into, and within individual nations -- should be viewed multidirectionally, not unidirectionally. Second, events and processes should be viewed in multiple perspective from the standpoints of the various participants, including immigrants, not simply from the perspective of the focal or receiving nation. Keeping this caveat in mind, let us look at how the theme of immigration (as well as other human movements) can be examined in U.S. History and World History/Geography courses.

U.S. History

As traditionally presented, U.S. history is essentially unidirectional, not multidirectional. One of the basic structural concepts for teaching U.S. history (as well as U.S. literature, art, and music) has been that of the United States as a society created by a unidirectional, east-to-west flow of people and culture. The United States has generally been viewed and presented as mainly the product of civilization which spread

from Western Europe across the Atlantic Ocean to what is today the east coast of the United States and then west to the Pacific.

Within this framework, already existing societies, such as Native American civilizations and northern Mexican communities, almost always appear as obstacles to the advance of westward-moving Anglo civilization. In addition, these groups, as well as later immigrant groups within the United States, are generally addressed as problems which must be corrected or at least kept under control. While the ethnic civil rights and cultural revitalization movements of the 1960s and 1970s have generated some overdue reform in textbook and curricular treatment of ethnic groups, the ethnocentric, unidirectional vision of our nation's past continues to straitjacket much thinking and teaching about the U.S. experience.

At best, most books and curricula on U.S. history give only token recognition to the development of cultures in America before the coming of the Europeans and to the growth of Native American, Hispanic, and Mexican civilizations before the U.S. conquest of their territories. While focusing on the east-to-west flow of civilization from Europe, U.S. history courses have traditionally devoted relatively little substantive attention to the northwesterly flow of civilization from Africa to America, the northerly flow of Hispanic and Mexican civilization into what is today the U.S. Southwest, and the easterly flow of civilization and cultures from Asia. Even when treating immigration from Eastern Europe, the emphasis is often on the theme of "how do we deal with them" (how do we Americanize or de-foreignize them).

By rejecting an invalid, ethnocentric, and distorting unidirectional view and adopting a multidirectional view of human movement -- both migration and immigration -- as an organizing framework and integrating theme, U.S. history teachers and curriculum developers can bring U.S. history into true global perspective. Through this multidirectional conceptual framework teachers can examine such topics as:

(1) the varieties of Native American civilizations, including their spread throughout what was to become the United States, and their actions in dealing with the movements of other Native American societies;

(2) the movement of European, Indian, and African-descent explorers and settlers who came north to establish communities in northern New

Spain and Mexico (later the U.S. Southwest), along with the movement of English, French, Dutch, and other European peoples onto the Atlantic Coast and the southward movement of Russians into what is today northern California;

(3) the myriad movements of people throughout what is today the United States and the resulting interactions, particularly the relations of Native American civilizations with expanding U.S. society from the east and expanding Mexican society from the south;

(4) the westward expansion of the United States, including the mutual relations of Anglo-Americans and Mexicans as the United States took over half of northern Mexico by conquest and annexation;

(5) the continuous immigration of peoples from Asia, Africa, Latin America, Europe, and Australia into the United States, including the perspectives both of immigrants and of persons and institutions within the United States (including former immigrants and their descendants).

Throughout, a multiple perspective approach should be used. For example, the theme of immigration generates a number of multiple perspective questions. Why have immigrants chosen to leave or how have they been forced to leave their homelands to come to the United States? How have persons already in the United States viewed and responded to immigrants from different parts of the world? How have immigrants interpreted and adapted to life in the United States? How have U.S. institutions reacted to the presence and potential presence of immigrants?

World History and Geography

As with U.S. history, problems also exist in the quest to globalize the teaching of world history and geography. To avoid ethnocentrism, multidirectionalism and multiperspectivism must be maintained in addressing the topic of human movement. Just as the east-to-west perspective impedes global understanding in the teaching of U.S. history, likewise the Western Civilization fixation impedes global understanding in the teaching of world history and geography.

World history (as well as so-called world literature, art, and music) often becomes little more than the story of Europe, the development of European civilization, and European expansion into other world areas. Within that framework, Africa, Asia, Australia, and the Americas only come into existence when and because Europeans "discover" them. While

other world areas sometimes receive token attention prior to "European discovery," their place in world history is usually addressed mainly in a post-discovery framework, with an emphasis on European impact (often presented as the bringing of culture by Europeans). If educators are to liberate schools and students from this distorting Eurocentric vision, so-called world history must become truly global history.

How can this be accomplished? A course in world history might begin with the examination of the independent, parallel, and simultaneous development of civilizations in Europe, Africa, Asia, Australia, and the Americas. As the world's societies come into closer contact and movement across societal borders increases, such processes would be examined globally. This examination would include such themes as the multi-directional movement of peoples; the expansion of societies in different parts of the globe; the efforts of societies to obstruct the expansion of others; the actions of different nations to restrict, encourage, or regulate immigration or emigration of individuals and groups; the re-actions of different societies to immigrants and conquered groups; and the adaptations of immigrants and conquered peoples to life in new societies.

Comparative migration and immigration, then, can become an organizing framework, or at least a continuously integrated theme, for the teaching of world history and geography. Moreover, this human movement should be viewed multidirectionally -- not simply in the context of internal move-ment within Europe and the United States, European and U.S. expansion, and immigration into Europe and the United States by peoples from around the globe. Through this multidirectional conceptual framework, teachers could examine such topics as:

(1) the independent development of different societies in Asia, Africa, Europe, Australia, and the Americas;

(2) the experiences of different societies as they have come into increasingly close physical proximity and have infringed on each others' turfs;

(3) the movement of peoples between societies, the differing responses of various societies to immigration, and the diverse reactions of immigrants in new societies;

(4) developing global, as contrasted with national, efforts to deal with the many questions raised both by global human movement and by

national responses to that human movement;

(5) future global and national options for responding to the growing reality and inevitability of cross-national human movement.

Throughout this process, a multi-perspective approach should be used. Discussion questions such as the following might be used: How did the invasion of Rome look from the perspective of the Visigoths, as well as of the Romans? How did different African and Native American civilizations view the expansion of others within their continents? How did different Asian societies establish their territories and at whose expense? How has the idea of European expansion been viewed, not only by Europeans, but also by Africans, Asians, Australians, and Native Americans? (In other words, what did they think about being "discovered" and colonized by Europeans?)

In discussing immigration, the teacher might ask: In which directions and between what societies have people moved at different times in history? Why did people make decisions to move? In which instances were movements involuntary, as through expulsion or enslavement? How have different societies at different times reacted to the coming of immigrants and refugees? How have immigrants viewed and adapted to the countries into which they have moved? How have the institutions in different societies responded to the presence and potential coming of immigrants and refugees?

One massively-growing global issue has been that of international refugees. Some questions related to this issue are: Throughout history, from what countries have refugees departed and why? Into what nations have they immigrated and why? What is the current refugee picture, in terms of both countries of departure and countries in which refugees find sanctuary? (For example, see Document A, Major Sources and Locations of Refugees, 1980.)[3] What have been the responses of different nations to refugees? What have been the experiences of refugees in different nations?

The study of immigration, the refugee phenomenon, and other forms of human movement can help transform Eurocentric world history into true global world history. Multi-directionalism and multi-perspectivism should provide the framework. Better global understanding can be the result.

A Media Approach to Global Migration

To help make these general ideas more concrete, I will describe an approach to the theme of human migration that I have used -- the integration of feature films and closely related reading material in a course which focused on migration. Although this course was given at the university level, this teaching strategy can be easily adapted for high school and junior high school settings.

The course, which Dr. Leon Campbell and I offered, was entitled "The Feature Film as Historical Source: A Study of Human Dilemmas." The major historical dilemmas we addressed in the course were: (1) the conflict between law and justice, and (2) economic dislocation and human migration. In examining each theme, we showed four feature films, chosen from around the world, and required the reading of two books.[4]

For the use of economic dislocation and human migration, the films selected dealt with interpretations of that global phenomenon. These films were: John Ford's *The Grapes of Wrath* (USA), the story of Oklahomans who migrated to California with the hope of finding work during the Great Depression of the 1930s; *Vidas Secas* (*Barren Lives* -- Brazil), the story of migrant workers in backlands northeastern Brazil of the 1930s during one of the devastating droughts which periodically wrack that sprawling region; *Kuhle Wampe (Whither Germany* -- Germany), an interpretation of the effect of post-World War I economic disruption on the lives of Germans; and *The Passengers* (Algeria), an examination of the experiences of Algerian immigrants in France as viewed through the eyes of one Algerian boy. In addition, students read Oscar Handlin's *The Uprooted*, a study of European migration to the United States, and John Steinbeck's classic novel, *The Grapes of Wrath*. We chose the latter so that students could compare the ways in which director Ford had reinterpreted the theme of migration when he transformed the novel into film. Based on the books, films, and class discussions, students wrote ten-page interpretive papers examining the theme of human migration.

Although we restricted our study of migration to two books and four films, many others could be considered. Some other possible films include *The Promised Land* (Chile), *Rocco and His Brothers* (Italy), *America, America* (USA), and *Hester Street* (USA). Films, as well as books, should be selected for their capacity to provide insights into human experience, to raise thought-provoking questions, to expose students to multiple perspectives, and to illustrate the global multidirectionality of

migration. Finally, my experience in this and other film courses has demonstrated the critical need for a careful integration of film and reading material in order to maximize student learning and understanding.

While we were fortunate enough to be able to structure an entire segment of a course around thought-provoking films about migration, such will not be the fortune of most teachers. However, media can be used in imaginative ways to add a valuable dimension to the study of this and other historical themes. Moreover, this use of media need not be restricted to the classroom. Media can also be incorporated by having students take advantage of the societal media curriculum -- the ongoing process by which the mass media "teach" the public about human migration.

One study reported that young people between the ages of 3 and 16 spend one-sixth of their waking hours watching television.[5] According to another estimate, by graduation the average high school senior will have spent 12,000 hours in the classroom and 15,000 hours in front of the television set. In other words, teachers may trail television in direct contact hours by 20% -- and television is only one component of the media curriculum, which also includes motion pictures, magazines, newspapers, and radio.

Moreover, when we think of the media as an educational force, we must avoid thinking only of those aspects of the media that purport to deliver facts and interpretations -- news magazines, newspapers, radio and television news, and documentary films. So-called "entertainment media," such as feature films and television series, have also had a powerful impact on shaping national, group, and individual attitudes, beliefs, values, perceptions, and "knowledge", and have influenced decisions and actions.[6]

The theme of migration is often included in media presentations. Teachers should use that media curriculum. As part of the ongoing study of human migration -- both in world and U.S. history -- each student can develop a media curriculum notebook concerning media treatments of that theme. Assign students to keep a record of how different television and radio news commentators address and interpret the theme of migration and immigration.[7] Collect, analyze, and write personal commentaries on newspaper and magazine stories, editorials, and columns on these topics. When students attend motion pictures or view television shows, have them pay special attention to the treatment of human migration and write brief

analyses of that treatment.

In short, teachers can make the media curriculum work for them. It is there. Students are exposed to it, so why not take advantage of it? Moreover, using the media curriculum makes another contribution to students. Schools strive to help prepare young people for the future. That future will be one in which the media will play an overwhelming role in their ongoing education, not only about migration, but also a myriad of other subjects. Therefore, schools should help increase students' capacity to use -- rather than be used by -- that media curriculum.

Footnotes *

1 Emma Lazarus, "The New Colossus" (1883).

2 For example, see Franklin D. Scott (ed.), *World Migration in Modern Times* (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1968).

3 Kathleen Newland, *Refugees: The New International Politics of Displacement* (Worldwatch Paper 43; Washington, D.C.: Worldwatch Institute, 1981), pp. 10-11. Also see Sarah K. Brandel, "Refugees: New Dimensions to an Old Problem" (Washington, D.C.: Overseas Development Council, 1980).

4 For a more complete description of the course as well as examples of student papers, see Carlos E. Cortés, Leon G. Campbell, and Alan Curl, *A Filmic Approach to the Study of Historical Dilemmas* (Riverside: Latin American Studies Program, University of California, 1976).

5 Wilbur Schramm, James Lyle, and E.B. Parker, *Television in the Lives of Our Children* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1961), p. 12.

6 Garth Jowett, Film: *The Democratic Art* (Boston: Little, Brown & Company, 1976); Robert Sklar, *Movie-made America: A Cultural History of American Movies* (New York: Random House, 1975); Lary L. May, *Screening out the Past: The Birth of Mass Culture and the Motion Picture Industry* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1980); Robert Singer and Robert Kazdon (eds.), *Television and Social Behavior. Journal of Social Issues, XXXII* (Fall, 1976).

7 Additional ideas for examining television newscasts can be found in *Making the News: A PTST Curriculum Project* (Chicago: Prime Time School Television, 1979).

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DOCUMENT A

Table 1: Major Sources and Locations of Refugees, 1980

Country of Origin	Refugees (number)	Main Countries of Asylum
Africa		
Angola	178,000	Zaire, Zambia
Burundi	154,500	Tanzania
Chad	100,000	Cameroon
Equitorial Guinea	115,000	Gabon, Cameroon
Ethiopia	1,954,000	Somalia, Sudan, Djibouti, Angola
Namibia	36,000	Angola
Rwanda	175,000	Uganda, Burundi, Tanzania, Zaire
Uganda	105,000	Sudan, United Kingdom, Zaire
Western Sahara	50,000	Algeria
Zaire	69,000	Uganda, Angola
Asia		
Afghanistan	1,700,000	Pakistan, Iran
Indochina (Kampuchea, Laos, Vietnam)	983,000	United States, People's Republic of China, Canada, Australia, France*
Pakistan	55,000	Bangladesh
People's Republic of China	183,500	Hong Kong, Macao, United States
Philippines	90,000	Malaysia
Tibet	78,000	India, Nepal, Bhutan, Switzerland
Europe		
Bulgaria	60,000	Turkey
Hungary	27,000	United Kingdom
USSR	66,000	United States, Israel
Latin America		
Argentina	266,000	Italy, Spain, Brazil
Chile	76,000	Venezuela, Argentina
Cuba	120,000	United States
El Salvador	20,000	Honduras
Haiti	41,000	Dominican Republic, United States **

Table 1, continued

Middle East		
Iraq	30,000	Iran
Palestine	1,757,000	Jordan, Gaza Strip, West Bank, Lebanon, Syria
Internationally Displaced		
Cyprus	193,000	
Ethiopia	850,000	
East Timor	200,000	
Kampuchea	4,000,000	
Laos	1,000,000	
Lebanon	1,000,000	

* Countries of permanent resettlement.

** The total number of Haitians in these countries is much larger. This figure is the U.S. Committee on Refugees' estimate of the number of political refugees among Haitian migrants.
(Source: U.S. Committee for Refugees, 1980 *World Refugee Survey*, and author's estimates based on recent news reports.)

SPECIAL CREDIT

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